



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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Region United Against Pedestrian Tragedies *A Sampling of Innovative Pedestrian Safety Initiatives*

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

- Metro has incorporated its pedestrian and bicycle safety 'refresher' training into its ongoing new bus operator training program. Operators are instructed on the rules of the road pertaining to pedestrians and cyclists, and provided with the pedestrian and cyclist view of the transportation environment. Additionally, they are brought into the field to observe and assess multi-modal movements in a busy downtown environment.

District of Columbia (DDOT)

- DDOT is moving ahead to implement recommendations of the Pedestrian Master Plan that was finalized in April 2009. This first comprehensive look at pedestrian safety and access in the District includes policy recommendations, a tool box of pedestrian friendly design guidelines and countermeasures, and a detailed analysis of eight important pedestrian corridors in DC. See www.ddot.dc.gov.
- The first HAWK hybrid pedestrian signal in DC was installed on Georgia Avenue, NW at Hemlock Street NW in 2009 to provide safer crossing opportunities for pedestrians. The signal is being studied as a pilot and being evaluated for expanded use.
- Three new Rapid Flashing Beacon crosswalks will be installed in the spring of 2010. These pedestrian activated crosswalk beacons dramatically increase driver compliance with pedestrian right of way laws, often to over 90 percent.
- Over \$4 million in American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funds have been dedicated to filling gaps in the sidewalk network across the District. The project aims to install 10 miles of sidewalk by the end of 2010.
- ARRA Funding will be used to construct pedestrian safety improvements on school walking routes.
- The DC Safe Routes to School program offers planning assistance to schools on a first-come, first-served basis. As part of the program, DDOT assists each school in the creation of an Action Plan for improving the safety and convenience of walking and bicycling to school. See www.ddot.dc.gov.
- The Murch Elementary Safe Routes to School program received the prestigious Oberstar Award for Safe Routes to School, a national award that recognizes outstanding Safe Routes to School programs.
- A fully separated "cycle track" was installed on 15th Street NW to offer bicyclists of all abilities the opportunity to safely ride in the street. DDOT now has 45 miles of marked bike lanes on DC streets.
- Construction is nearly complete on important off-street sections of the Metropolitan Branch Trail between Edgewood Street NE and the NOMA neighborhood.
- A major expansion of the SmartBike program is coming in 2010 that will greatly increase the number of bicycles and stations available.

Maryland State Highway Association (MSHA)

- Pedestrian and bicycle safety are emphasized as part of Maryland's *Choose Safety for Life* campaign, which stresses the importance of traffic safety. It is based on five key principles: **B-SAFE**: **B**uckle up, **S**low down – speeding kills, **A**lways drive sober, **F**ocus, **E**veryone share the road.
- In the last three years, Maryland has allocated \$400,000 in grant funds to the Washington regional *Street Smart* outreach campaign, with additional funds supporting enforcement efforts through its community traffic safety program.
- This year, 15 Maryland law enforcement agencies in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties will be conducting pedestrian safety outreach and enforcement efforts in the month of April.

- The Washington Regional Traffic Safety Program is working in collaboration with Casa of Maryland, El Zol radio and WPGC-FM on a pedestrian safety outreach program to at-risk pedestrians in Prince George's County. English and Spanish language public service announcements will be used with "Street Teams" to educate pedestrians and motorists in pedestrian safety zones in the District Heights and Langley Park areas of the County.
- The Maryland Highway Safety Office, in partnership with the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC), has implemented a *Street Smart* program in the Baltimore region, modeled after the successful *Street Smart* program in the Washington region.
- Maryland has designated more than \$2 million in Safe Routes to School grants in the Washington metropolitan region. Throughout the state there are 48 Safe Routes to School initiatives covering 41 jurisdictions with a total funding of over \$8 million in grants.
- On Maryland state highways, more than 489 Audible Pedestrian Signal (APS) projects have been installed or are in construction.
- In 2009, the State Highway Administration (SHA) constructed more than 44,000 linear feet of sidewalk. Currently, SHA manages nearly 1,000 miles of sidewalk along state highways.
- The SHA has more than 750 miles of designated bicycle routes in the State, including nearly 70 miles of specific bike lanes.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

- VDOT will be engaging in Phase 1 of the Virginia state bicycle plan this year in order to advance bike mobility, advocate for better bike accommodations, provide training opportunities and coordinate changes with the local public.
- Two percent of VDOT's paving program budget is dedicated to widening shoulders on Northern Virginia roadways annually, in turn improving bicycle safety and travel movement.
- Virginia's Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Policy continues to be executed aggressively, ensuring safe pedestrian and bicycling components are included with all roadway projects within the State. VDOT also promotes private developments follow the same philosophy as outlined in the Policy.
- Virginia's Safe Routes to School program promotes a comprehensive approach to enabling and encouraging students (K-8) to walk and bike to school safely. Program and infrastructure projects in Northern Virginia include the City of Alexandria and Vienna. http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/ted_Rt2_school_pro.asp.
- Route 15 Turn Lanes at Leesburg Animal Park project includes a shared use path and sidewalk between the intersection of Woodlea Drive and the town corporate limit at Masons Lane. Construction will start this spring and be completed in the fall.
- The planning and design stage of I-495 HOT Lanes is underway, and includes plans to improve bicycle and pedestrian access and enhance safety at designated primary/secondary road crossings.
- Countdown signals are being installed across the region to enhance pedestrian crossing safety.

Fairfax County, Virginia

- Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) conducts pedestrian safety enforcement in high pedestrian crash areas countywide. The FCPD conducts pedestrian enforcement and public awareness through all District Stations as part of traffic enforcement plans each year.
- Fairfax County has designated \$58 million in federal, state and county funding to construct pedestrian improvements in high-priority areas. Twenty major projects were completed over past two years. Bus stop improvements are underway at priority stops. More than 300 pedestrian projects and bus stop improvements are being designed for construction over the next few years.
- Fairfax County collaborated with VDOT to install over 1,000 modern LED countdown signals, more than any other jurisdiction in Virginia.
- Fairfax County developed a countywide network of preferred bike routes and produced their first bike map. A high-quality cartographic map allows cyclists to plan bike trips and connections across the County.
- Fairfax County has designated full-time staff to lead the County's efforts on pedestrian and bicycle issues.
- In coordination with VDOT, roadways in Fairfax County are being retrofitted with on-road bike lanes.

Montgomery County, Maryland

- Montgomery County, in its first year of funding the County Executive's Pedestrian Safety Initiative, appears to have reduced pedestrian collisions by seven percent. For all of 2008, there were 444 pedestrian collisions in the County. Based on collision data reported for January through September, pedestrian collisions dropped from 328 in 2008 to 304 in 2009. For all of 2009, the County recorded 14 pedestrian fatalities; there were 19 pedestrian fatalities in 2008. Full reporting of pedestrian collisions for all of 2009 is expected at the end of March.
- Montgomery County won a 2009 Silver Davey Award in the social issues category from the International Academy of the Visual Arts (IAVA) for their pedestrian safety video, "Drive Safe!®: Keeping Pedestrians Safe When You're Behind the Wheel." This video is part of the education effort launched in July to reduce pedestrian injuries and deaths by targeting new teen and adult drivers about their role in keeping pedestrians safe. Young drivers and those with less driving experience are at greater risk of being involved in collisions. Drive Safe!® features personal testimonials from people whose family members were killed in pedestrian collisions and drivers who struck pedestrians. The video can be viewed on the County's Pedestrian Safety Website: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/walk
- Traffic calming projects, constructing features that slow the speed of traffic—bulb-outs, pedestrian refuge islands, and lane narrowing with enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities—were completed in 2009 on Calverton Boulevard, Fairland Road, Lockwood Drive, Sligo Avenue, and Carroll Avenue. Evaluations of the first three traffic calming projects constructed in 2007 and 2008 (Connecticut Avenue, Aspen Hill Road, and Arcola Avenue) reveal that traffic speeds on these sections of roadway have been reduced by as much as 10 mph, with the speed of traffic now at or near the posted speed limits. Significantly, pedestrian collisions have been reduced on these three roadways by 70 to 100 percent. This program is being expanded in 2010.
- In 2008, Montgomery County began addressing pedestrian safety improvements in locations with the highest numbers of pedestrian collisions, known as "High Incidence Areas." Five pedestrian-traffic road safety audits have now been completed: 1) Piney Branch Road, between Flower Avenue and the Prince Georges County Line, 2) Wisconsin Avenue in Downtown Bethesda, between Montgomery Avenue and Leland Street, 3) Georgia Avenue in Downtown Silver Spring, between Spring Street and Sligo Avenue, 4) Rockville Pike between Halpine Road and Hubbard Drive, and 5) Four Corners, at the intersection of Colesville Road and University Boulevard. These audits have identified many operational and engineering improvements needed to aid pedestrian safety. Work began in the first two audit locations last year. Enhanced enforcement and education activities are also being implemented.
- The County's first bilingual (Spanish/English) grassroots pedestrian safety campaign was launched last fall along Piney Branch Road—the County's first "High Incidence Area" of elevated pedestrian collisions. Using Pedestrian Safety Promotion Teams clothed in neon (road safety) green shirts, groups of five to eight Spanish speaking educators approach pedestrians exhibiting unsafe pedestrian behaviors on the street, and informed them of how to be safe. Informational materials, as well as retro-reflective items and shopping bags are being distributed to pedestrians along this corridor.
- Montgomery County's Speed Camera Enforcement Program was doubled in 2009, from the original 30 fixed-site locations to 60 fixed-sites and six mobile units. The County's six mobile enforcement units allow the County to expand into additional areas to provide broader speed enforcement actions. Speed cameras have been highly effective in Montgomery County, reducing speeding by as much as 70 percent. Portions of the revenue from the Speed Camera Enforcement Program are being directed to funding the County's Pedestrian Safety Initiative.
- Montgomery County's DOT obtained State approval for the installation of a new innovative traffic signal (HAWK Signal), for use on Gude Drive at Display Court, where the Chase Homeless Shelter is located. The State requested modifications to the operational design—differentiating it from a standard HAWK signal operation. County engineers have dubbed the proposed Gude Drive version a "MoHAWK." With the State's approval to proceed, installation of the new "MoHAWK" signal will be completed in March 2010.

- With 23 percent of all pedestrian collisions in Montgomery County occurring in parking lots, the County launched a public education campaign aimed at both drivers and pedestrians in the groups at highest risk of being involved in these collisions.

Arlington County, Virginia

- The Arlington County Board adopted a sustainability initiative for 2010 that includes a strong bicycle and pedestrian access and safety component.
- The County is in its second full year of a volunteer bicycle and pedestrian counting effort. The program will help to document non-motorized transportation levels and lead to improved planning and engineering.
- Arlington County continues to phase out the use of brick crosswalks and is moving towards the use of high-visibility crosswalks on arterial streets to improve safety.
- In response to increased trail use by bicyclists and pedestrians, Arlington County has created and distributed user-friendly, bilingual (English and Spanish) flyers offering customized safety tips for cyclists and pedestrians on "sharing the way" with other trail users.
- Arlington County has invested in two dedicated BikeArlington staff who work full-time on bicycle safety, outreach and education.
- In an effort through Arlington's annual "Lights for Bikes" initiative and timed to coincide with daylight savings time, the County distributed and installed free bicycle lights and rear flashers to citizens riding without them.
- The County is offering 11 free Confident City Cycling (adult bicycle safety education) classes throughout the year, taught by League-Certified Instructors. These classes are for citizens who want to improve their urban bike riding skills and include classroom, open lot and road instruction. One of the classes will be bilingual (English and Spanish).
- Arlington is offering two Learn to Ride classes in 2010, taught by League-Certified Instructors. These classes are intended to teach adults how to ride a bike at a minimal fee.
- Arlington County is distributing bilingual Safe Bicycling in the Washington Area booklets, written by the Washington Area Bicyclists Association.

City of Alexandria, Virginia

- The City of Alexandria is installing four rapid flash beacons at locations across the City at Yoakum Parkway, Duke Street, Braddock Road Metro and Mount Vernon Avenue. These new lights will be operational the last week in March.

City of Rockville, Maryland

- The City of Rockville built two miles of new sidewalk, consisting of nine individual sidewalk links and installed 92 handicapped-accessible ramps.
- Rapid Flash Beacon Crosswalk Enhancers were installed at two locations with heavy volumes of pedestrian activity. The City also updated an illuminated crosswalk.
- Several sidewalks were installed using the Safe Routes to School grant money.
- 110 signalized intersections within the City limits were assessed for pedestrian safety improvements. This assessment also included 52 uncontrolled crosswalks near schools, metro stations, community facilities and shopping centers.
- The Rockville Mayor and Council adopted a Complete Streets Policy which will make streets more accessible to all forms of transportation, including pedestrians and bicyclists.

Note: Individual jurisdictions continue to explore engineering initiatives including improved sidewalks, sightlines, signals and markings, traffic calming and the use of technology, such as laser detectors and the "runway" lighting for crosswalks.

**All data provided by individual jurisdictions*